

REPORT ON THE WELLINGTON SCHOOL OF DESIGN.

SIR,—

School of Design, 19th December, 1887.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the work of this year in connection with drawing in public schools and the School of Design.

1. The system of drawing established has made very good progress, many schools doing excellent work, especially in the lower standards. The higher standards have not yet been systematically dealt with: this, of course, is a question of time; so soon as the lower standards are worked up, and passed forward, the upper ones will do their legitimate work; but no attempt at uniformity is now made, or advisable.

2. The teachers show evident interest in their work, and a fair appreciation of the value of drawing with reference to other subjects.

3. The teachers, students, and pupil-teachers have received a regular course of instruction, and the Wairarapa has received its share of attention.

4. The numbers on the roll at present are—Teachers, 18; students, 24; pupil-teachers, 86=128 (for the Wellington centre only); and about 30 at the Masterton centre. The attendances have been good, and the work fairly satisfactory.

5. A larger number of schools have been visited this year than in 1886, the number of teachers visited whilst at work in this subject being 165 as against 114 last year. All schools (with two exceptions) having over 40 children have been visited. No doubt, as the organization becomes more perfect, the whole of the schools will be visited.

6. The second-grade examinations held in June and December resulted as follows:—June: Blackboard practice, 92 examined, 30 passed; freehand, 106 examined, 73 passed; model, 93 examined, 32 passed: total examined 291, total passed 135: number of individual candidates presented 171, passed 95. December: Blackboard practice, 57 examined, 24 passed; freehand, 73 examined, 31 passed; model, 82 examined, 22 passed; geometrical, 34 examined, 18 passed; perspective, 10 examined, 4 passed: total examined 256, total passed 99: number of individual candidates presented 155, passed 75. Total number presented 326, passed 174. Sixteen teachers now hold the full second-grade certificate.

7. The first-grade examination for scholars of the schools was held in June. Owing to the fact of a decided change being made in the system of instruction, the passes were not so large proportionately as last year. The whole of the subjects presented by the Science and Art Department for a full first-grade certificate are now taken. The number of papers taken this year is as follows: Freehand papers examined 540, passed 170; model papers examined 150, passed 57; scale papers examined 222, passed 72; geometrical papers examined 205, passed 103: total examined 1,117, total passed 402—an increase of 346 papers upon 1886. Model and scale drawing were introduced for the first time in the last examination. Number of individual successful candidates, 333. Eleven scholars now hold full certificates, seven being from Thorndon School, two from Mount Cook Boys' School, and one each from Te Aro and Newtown Schools.

There is, I am afraid, too much competition in this examination. I am anxious that the teachers should understand that only those scholars fitted to come up in the ordinary course of work should be presented for examination, and not take in hand specially a large number of scholars for the purpose of drilling them up to the requisite certificate pass.

School of Design.

8. The School of Design has considerably increased its usefulness during the year. The number of students has increased from 101 in 1886 to 155, as follows: First quarter, 103; second quarter, 117; third quarter, 154; fourth quarter, 155. Including the teachers in the service of the Board, the total number of students receiving instruction every week is 283.

A second year's course of instruction in technical and ordinary classes has been given, and a very marked improvement has taken place in the style and general quality of the work.

9. The mechanical and engineering class, under Mr. Herzog, C.E., has done some very thorough work during the year, and has been greatly appreciated by those in attendance. The work is practical, students being given the principles and theories of each machine or part they are engaged upon; and, in some instances, working models have been made.

10. The architectural class, under Mr. J. Charlesworth, architect, has made good progress. This class was for a time under Mr. F. J. de Clere, who resigned through illness, and again temporarily under Mr. Morison; so that no examination has been held. The work in this class is especially suited to carpenters, builders, &c., and the instruction practical throughout.

A model of a spiral staircase has been made by two students from working drawings, and is the best proof of the practical character of the work done.

11. The mathematical class, under Mr. Herzog, C.E., has proved useful, as being specially adapted to the two former classes, the instruction being applied to works of mechanical and architectural construction.

12. The modelling class, under Mr. Morison, has made rapid progress. The work shown in this section speaks for itself. It is hoped that the practical value of this class will be demonstrated during the forthcoming year.

13. The day classes generally are well attended. Several of the students are working with a view to utilising their knowledge.

14. Branch classes have been established at Newtown School under Mr. Bennett with success, the work being of good quality; and at Masterton School under Mr. J. Gant.

15. The works of the students were exhibited at the last exhibition of the Fine Arts Association.